UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
SEP 13 1994
SCIENCE LIBRARY

94-15 rescinded by 96-4

SC

ERCB

Energy Resources Conservation Board
640 Fifth Avenue SW
Calgary, Alberta
Canada T2P 3G4

Informational Letter

IL 94-16

TO: All Oil and Gas Operators

2 August 1994

REPROCESSING AND MISSING DATA FEES FOR WELL & FACILITY ACTIVITY STATEMENTS

The ERCB will be implementing a fee for reprocessing Well and Facility Activity Statements due to errors and a fee for requesting and following up on missing wells and facilities.

Over the past few years, the ERCB has undertaken several initiatives to work cooperatively with industry in improving compliance with S-Form reporting requirements, however, we have not experienced sufficient improvement regarding these problems. Significant additional workload is incurred by the ERCB due to error reprocessing and missing data follow-up. This situation is also unfair to operators who do submit valid and timely data in an effective manner.

This matter has been discussed extensively with CAPP and SEPAC. One of the many reasons given by industry for non-compliance is the difficulty of detecting errors due to editing routines not being incorporated into their computer systems. It was suggested by many operators that editing routines would be built into any redesign of systems required to start reporting the new Well and Facilitiy Activity Statements (WAS and FAS) being developed by PRIDE (Partner Regulatory Information Data Exchange).

These developments were recently outlined in an Informational Letter, IL 94-14 "PRIDE FORMS - IMPLEMENTATION NOTICE". With operators redeveloping their computer systems in order to report on the WAS and FAS, it is the appropriate time to make industry aware that we will be putting a reporting non-compliance fee system in place. As the ERCB redevelops its own system, business rules will be identified and made available to industry. These business rules will include an indication of which rule will generate a fee should non-compliance occur and thereby provide industry with the information needed to ensure that appropriate edits are put in place by operators when redeveloping their own systems. This document will be made available to industry as soon as possible.

Reporting non-compliance fees will become effective for January 1995 WAS and FAS filings. The Board may decide that invoices for these fees for the month of January may be waived to give industry the benefit of additional implementation time.

The Board is undertaking a brief study with the Alberta Department of Energy to ensure that our respective fee systems are coordinated and aligned in such a manner as to avoid duplicate charging on incorrect and late operator filings.

As noted above, further details regarding the specific chargeable situations and dollar amounts will be issued to industry as soon as available.

N. G. Berndtsson
Board Member

ERCB

Energy Resources Conservation Board

640 Fifth Avenue SW
Calgary, Alberta
Canada T2P 3G4

Informational Letter

IL 94-17

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
OCT 11 1994
SCIENCE LIBRARY

TO: All Oil, Gas, and Pipeline Operators

7 September 1994

NOTIFICATION OF PIPELINE PROJECT TO CONSERVATION AND RECLAMATION (C & R) INSPECTORS OF ALBERTA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Alberta Environmental Protection administers the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act (EPEA). Therefore, Alberta Environmental Protection is a directly affected party in any pipeline application to the Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB). To avoid a delay in the approval of a pipeline application, the ERCB and Alberta Environmental Protection require the proponent to discuss conservation and reclamation procedures with the regional Conservation and Reclamation Inspector early in the planning stage of any new pipeline project (Land Reclamation Division on patented land, Land and Forest inspectors on public land in the Green Area, and Agriculture, Food and Rural Development inspectors on public land in the White Area). This requirement applies to all pipelines under the Pipeline Act and the EPEA. The results of the discussion with the Conservation and Reclamation Inspector should be included in the pipeline permit application to the ERCB.

A list of the regional Conservation and Reclamation Offices is enclosed.

Alberta Environmental Protection has the following publications available from the Land Reclamation Division at 427-6323:

1. Environmental Protection Guidelines for Pipelines.

2. Guide for Pipelines Pursuant to the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act and Regulations.

3. Environmental Handbook for Pipeline Construction.

Should you have questions regarding this Informational Letter, please call the Land Reclamation Division (Alberta Environmental Protection) at 427-6323 or the Pipeline Department (ERCB) at 297-8135.

K. G. Sharp, P.Eng.
Manager
Pipeline Department
Energy Resources Conservation Board

L. K. Brocke
Director
Land Reclamation Division
Environmental Regulatory Services
Alberta Environmental Protection

Enclosure

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2015

https://archive.org/details/energyresources19941622

ATTACHMENT 1: OFFICES FOR NON-PUBLIC LAND
(Alberta Environmental Protection, Land Reclamation Division, Field Services Branch)

NORTHERN REGION

Peace River Office
Bag 900, Box 5
2nd Floor, 9621 - 96A Avenue
Peace River AB T8S 1T4
Phone: 624-6333

Grande Prairie Office
2nd Floor, Room 2001
10320 - 99 Street
Grande Prairie AB T8V 6J4
Phone: 538-5459

Stony Plain Office
2nd Floor, 4709 - 44 Avenue
Stony Plain AB T7Z 1N4
Phone: 963-5351

Westlock Office
10003 - 100 Street
Provincial Building
Westlock AB T0G 2L0
Phone: 349-3445

St. Paul Office
Box 308
3rd Floor, 5025 - 49 Avenue
St. Paul AB T0A 3A4
Phone: 645-6394

Wainwright Office
Box 2169
810 - 14 Avenue
Wainwright AB T0B 4P0
Phone: 842-7535

Camrose Office
2nd Floor, Room 203
4867 - 50 Street
Camrose AB T4V 1T6
Phone: 679-1274

SOUTHERN REGION

Red Deer Office
3rd Floor, 4920 - 51 Street
Red Deer AB T4N 6K8
Phone: 340-7741

Hanna Office
Box 1088
Centre Street
Hanna AB T0J 1P0
Phone: 854-5579

Calgary Office
2nd Floor, Deerfoot Square
2938 - 11 Street NE
Calgary AB T2E 7L7
Phone: 297-8295

Lethbridge Office
200 - 5 Avenue S
Lethbridge AB T1J 4C7
Phone: 381-5491

Medicine Hat Office
Room 204
346 - 3 Street SE
Medicine Hat AB T1A 0G7
Phone: 529-3685

ATTACHMENT 2: OFFICES FOR PUBLIC LAND IN THE GREEN AREA
(Alberta Environmental Protection, Land and Forest Services)

ATHABASCA FOREST

Fort McMurray Office
168 Airport Road
Fort McMurray AB T9H 4P1
Phone: 743-7124

BOW/CROW FOREST

Calgary Office
8660 Bearspaw Dam Road NW
Box 70028
Bowness Postal Outlet
Calgary AB T3B 5K3
Phone: 297-8800

EDSON FOREST

Edson Office
203, 111 - 54 Street
Edson AB T7E 1T2
Phone: 723-8269

FOOTNER LAKE FOREST

High Level Office
Bag 900
High Level AB T0H 1Z0
Phone: 926-3761

GRANDE PRAIRIE FOREST

Grande Prairie Office
10811 - 84 Avenue
Grande Prairie AB T8V 3J2
Phone: 538-8080

LAC LA BICHE FOREST

Lac La Biche Office
Provincial Building
Box 450
Lac La Biche AB T0A 2C0
Phone: 623-5240

PEACE RIVER FOREST

Peace River Office
Postal Bag 900-39
Peace River AB T8S 1T4
Phone: 624-6221

ROCKY/CLEARWATER FOREST

Rocky Mountain House Office
Box 1720
Rocky Mountain House AB T0M 1T0
Phone: 845-8211

SLAVE LAKE FOREST

Slave Lake Office
301 Birch Road NE
Box 390
Slave Lake AB T0G 2A0
Phone: 849-3061

WHITECOURT FOREST

Whitecourt Office
4004 - 47 Street
Whitecourt AB T7S 1M8
Phone: 778-7153

ATTACHMENT 3: OFFICES FOR PUBLIC LAND IN THE WHITE AREA
(Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, Rural Development Division)

PEACE RIVER REGION

Fairview Office
Box 159
Provincial Building
Fairview AB T0H 1L0
Phone: 835-2209

Grande Prairie Office
Box 24, Room 3001
Provincial Building
10320 - 99 Street
Grande Prairie AB T8V 6J4
Phone: 538-5260

High Level Office
Box 127
Provincial Building
High Level AB T0H 1Z0
Phone: 926-3512

High Prairie Office
Box 1380
Provincial Building
High Prairie AB T0G 1E0
Phone: 523-6580

Peace River Office
Bag 900, Box 35
Provincial Building
Peace River AB T0H 2X0
Phone: 624-6116

Spirit River Office
Box 579
M & J Building
Spirit River AB T0H 3G0
Phone: 864-3574

Valleyview Office
Box 1470
Provincial Building
Valleyview AB T0H 3N0
Phone: 524-5522

NORTHEAST REGION

Bonnyville Office
Box 6009
Bonnyville AB T9N 2G4
Phone: 826-4297

Lac La Biche Office
Box 839
Provincial Building
Lac La Biche AB T0A 2C0
Phone: 623-5279

St. Paul Office
Box 1959
4916 - 51 Avenue
St. Paul AB T0A 3A0
Phone: 645-6336

Wainwright Office
Box 516
810 - 14 Avenue
Wainwright AB T0B 4P0
Phone: 842-7548

NORTHWEST REGION

Athabasca Office
Box 660
Athabasca AB T0G 0B0
Phone: 675-4277

Barrhead East Office
Box 1660
6203 - 49 Street
Barrhead AB T0G 0E0
Phone: 674-8231

Drayton Valley
Box 6411
Fidelis Building
Drayton Valley AB T0E 0M0
Phone: 542-3537

ATTACHMENT 3: OFFICES FOR PUBLIC LAND IN THE WHITE AREA CONTINUED
(Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, Rural Development Division)

Evansburg Office
Box 360
Dieckman Building
Evansburg AB T0E 0T0
Phone: 727-3673

Sherwood Park Office
182 Chippewa Road
Sherwood Park AB T8A 4H5
Phone: 464-7955

CENTRAL REGION

Calgary Office
Main Floor
703 - 6 Avenue SW
Calgary AB T2P 0T9
Phone: 297-6426

Ponoka Office
Box 4304
Provincial Building
Ponoka AB T4J 1R7
Phone: 783-7090

Red Deer Office
Room 504
First Red Deer Place
4911 - 51 Street
Red Deer AB T4N 6V4
Phone: 340-5451

Rocky Mountain House Office
P. O. Box 1590
Provincial Building
4919 - 51 Street
Rocky Mountain House AB T0M 1T0
Phone: 845-8242

SOUTH REGION

Lethbridge Office
2nd Floor, Sun Centre
530 - 8 Street South
Lethbridge AB T1J 2J8
Phone: 381-5487

Medicine Hat Office
Room 106
Provincial Building
346 - 3 Street SE
Medicine Hat AB T1A 0G7
Phone: 529-3677

ERCB

Energy Resources Conservation Board

640 Fifth Avenue SW
Calgary, Alberta
Canada T2P 3G4

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
OCT 11 1994
SCIENCE LIBRARY

Informational Letter IL 94-18

TO: All Oil, Gas, and Oil Sands Operators

20 September 1994

ISOLATION PACKER TESTS TESTING AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

This replaces Informational Letter IL 89-1.

The Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB) issued Informational Letter IL 89-1 in 1989. It specified the testing and reporting requirements for all wells required to be equipped with a production packer to isolate injected or produced fluids from the production casing. The Board has identified many cases where these tests were not performed, the test procedures were not adequate, the interpretation of the tests was not accurate, remedial action was not taken to restore or confirm isolation, and test results were not reported to the ERCB's area offices. To achieve an effective regulatory solution and reduce the complexity of work required to complete and report the test results, the Board has adopted the following program that focuses on the operator's responsibility to conduct safe operations and to maintain the integrity of the well. The revised procedures also provide a streamlined acknowledgement process and a selective audit program with prompt action taken when necessary.

The intent of section 6.120 of the Oil and Gas Conservation Regulations is to ensure all injected fluids other than potable water are isolated from the production casing above the production packer. Section 7.050 requires the production casing in a well producing sour gas with a concentration greater than 50 moles per kilomole, unless the well is produced by artificial lift, be similarly protected. Shut-in wells within these categories and those wells suspended utilizing a production packer in accordance with ID 90-4 are expected to comply with these requirements. The Board finds that the present requirements for annual packer isolation tests must continue to provide the appropriate safeguards.

1. Packer isolation tests must be conducted annually and the results forwarded to the appropriate ERCB area office by 1 September of each year. The test results must be certified as conclusively proving hydraulic isolation by personnel qualified, through training and experience, to make such interpretations.

2. For packer isolation tests that do not prove hydraulic isolation remedial work must be completed and re-test certification submitted to the appropriate ERCB area office within 30 days of the original test date if injection operations, production operations, or the current well status is to continue.

3. Sufficient information regarding the test method, measurements, and records (i.e. location, well status, tubing and casing pressures, fluid fill volume, fluid type, fluid recovered, test duration, applied pressure, pressure build up, pressure decline, well stabilization times, test gauge range, bleed down time) must be retained for 5 years by the licensee to allow ERCB staff to audit company packer operations upon request.

4. Operating wells that require a production packer that have not been tested or for which the certified test results have not been forwarded to the ERCB by 1 September of each year shall be shut in until the requirements have been met. Shut in or suspended wells that require a production packer and which have not met these requirements will be assessed to determine whether the current well status should be continued or the well should be abandoned.

5. Repeated incidence of non-compliance with the production packer testing and reporting requirements could lead to the following action by the ERCB:

- shutting in of associated facilities
- rescission of approvals
- issuance of abandonment orders for the wells and associated facilities.

The attached recommended testing procedure guidelines were developed to clarify the ERCB's expectations and to provide guidance for evaluation of the test results. In all cases, the test procedure should be reviewed by the person who will certify the test results, prior to conducting the test, to ensure that the test method is adequate to prove hydraulic isolation. Variations to the recommended test procedure must be clearly identified and retained on file with the test results.

A sample form which can be used for reporting and certifying the test results is attached. A completed copy of this form, or equivalent documentation, shall be filed with the appropriate ERCB area office by 1 September of each year. Further information regarding this matter can be obtained from the ERCB area offices or the Application Section of the Drilling and Production Department at 297-8167.

J. R. Nichol, P.Eng.
Manager
Drilling and Production Department

Enclosure

TEST PROCEDURE GUIDELINE

The following test procedures are intended as a guideline only. Operators are expected to design the test procedure which best suits their specific well situation and which will provide an accurate evaluation of the hydraulic isolation of the tubing/casing annulus. A record of the test method, the test data and an interpretation of the test must be retained on file with the operator for a period of 5 years and be available for audit by ERCB staff. Only the test report signed by the person taking responsibility for the evaluation should be forwarded to the ERCB area office.

In general, the ERCB would accept, as a maximum, a 3 per cent pressure decline over a 15 minute test duration as a successful packer isolation test. However, factors such as annular fluid capacity, and the mode of operation should be considered when designing the test and evaluating the test data. Prior to beginning the test the following information should be measured and recorded:

- tubing pressure
- casing pressure
- annular fill/bleed-off volume

CASE 1 **Casing pressure greater than 1400 kPa prior to bleed down**

- bleed down the casing pressure to zero kPa
- record the shut-in pressure after 24 hours and evaluate any pressure increase (if the pressure increase is less than 42 kPa (3% of 1400 kPa) the test is considered satisfactory)

CASE 2 **Casing pressure less than 1400 kPa prior to bleed down**

- bleed down the casing pressure to zero kPa
- pressure test the casing annulus to 1400 kPa and allow pressure to stabilize (approximately 15-30 minutes depending on the volume of fluid needed for the pressure test)
- after the well has stabilized, record the pressure over a 15 minute test interval
- bleed off the test pressure to zero kPa and record the shut-in pressure after 24 hours (if the pressure change is less than 3% of the test pressure over the 15 minute test interval and the pressure increase after the 24 hour shut-in period is less than 42 kPa the test is considered satisfactory)

CASE 3 **No initial casing pressure**

- pressure test the casing annulus to 1400 kPa and allow pressure to stabilize (approximately 15-30 minutes depending on the volume of fluid needed for the pressure test)
- after the well has stabilized, record the pressure over a 15 minute test interval (if the pressure change is less than 3% of the test pressure the test is considered satisfactory)
- bleed off the casing pressure

NOTE: Class Ia waste disposal wells must be tested to a minimum of 7000 kPa

The test results must be certified as conclusively proving hydraulic isolation by personnel qualified, through training and experience, to make such interpretations.

ANNUAL ISOLATION PACKER TEST REPORT

COMPANY NAME: _____

UNIQUE WELL IDENTIFIER 00\00-00-000-00 W0M\0	TEST DATE	PASS	FAIL	PROPOSES REMEDIAL ACTION DATE (WITHIN 30 DAYS OF TEST DATE)

I hereby certify that I have reviewed the test procedures and test data and confirm the accuracy of the results submitted. I am qualified through experience and training to make such assessments.

_____ _____

Signature Title

ERCB

Energy Resources Conservation Board

640 Fifth Avenue SW
Calgary, Alberta
Canada T2P 3G4

Informational Letter

IL 94-19

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
NOV 22 1994
SCIENCE LIBRARY

TO: All Coal and Oil Sands Mine Operators

19 October 1994

DAM SAFETY ACCORD

As a result of changes in legislation and review of regulatory procedures, the Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB) and Alberta Environmental Protection (AEP) have revised the Dam Safety Accord of April 1989. The revised Dam Safety Accord between the Coal and Oil Sands Departments of the ERCB and the Dam Safety Branch, Water Resources Division, AEP describes the roles and responsibilities of each organization and the administrative procedures for the submission, referral and review, and approval of applications for impoundment and diversion structures at coal and oil sands mining projects. The Accord also addresses the coordination of monitoring and inspection responsibilities.

The Accord was developed to ensure consistent and coordinated service while optimizing use of the organizations' resources and provide an expeditious "one-window" process for applications and reports handling.

Key points of the Accord include the following:

1. Applications for new project approvals (e.g. oils sands mine approvals and coal mine site permits) and any amendments of these approvals will continue to be submitted to the respective department of the ERCB as the "one-window" between the regulatory agencies and the applicant. Dam Safety Branch and government department involvement will be coordinated by the Environmental Impact Assessment Division of AEP. ERCB will be responsible for issuing the project approval addressing the conceptual planning and preliminary engineering design of any containment or diversion structures.

2. Applications and the detailed geotechnical design for construction of oil sands tailings ponds, sediment settling ponds, water storage reservoirs, and stream diversion structures will be submitted to the Controller of Water Resources. Dam Safety Branch will be the lead agency responsible for coordinating the application review and issuing the approval.

3. Applications and the detailed design for coal tailings ponds requires approvals from the ERCB and AEP. Joint guidelines will be available for this purpose. Coal Department, ERCB will be the one-window for applications. ERCB review and approval will be coordinated with Dam Safety Branch and the Conservation and Reclamation Review Committee through the Director of Land Reclamation Branch, AEP.

Any questions regarding this Accord can be directed to: Dam Safety Branch, Alberta Environmental Protection 422-1358, Coal Department, ERCB 297-7249 and Oil Sands Department, ERCB 297-5329.

Alberta Environmental Protection

for Peter G. Melnychuk
Deputy Minister

Energy Resources Conservation Board

Frank J. Mink
Vice Chairman

DAM SAFETY ACCORD

JOINTLY PREPARED BY:

THE COAL DEPARTMENT
AND
THE OIL SANDS DEPARTMENT
OF THE
ENERGY RESOURCES CONSERVATION BOARD
AND
THE DAM SAFETY BRANCH
OF
ALBERTA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

19 October 1994

ERCB/AEP DAM SAFETY ACCORD

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Regulation of the location, construction, and operation of impoundment facilities (e.g. tailings, sediment settling, water storage ponds), and drainage diversion structures in coal and oil sands mining projects in Alberta is the joint responsibility of Alberta Environmental Protection (AEP) under the Water Resources Act and the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act and the Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB) pursuant to the Coal Conservation and Oil Sands Conservation Acts.

As a result there is a shared responsibility of the ERCB's Coal and Oil Sands Departments and AEP's Dam Safety Branch, AEP, requiring that each agency's mandate is fulfilled and activities are coordinated to eliminate duplication of services.

The ERCB and AEP agree to the following procedures for the review and approval of impoundment facilities and diversion structures in coal and oil sands mining projects.

2.0 PURPOSE OF THE AGREEMENT

This accord defines roles and responsibilities of the two agencies. It describes a procedure for the review and approval of impoundment and diversion facilities in coal and oil sands mining projects. The issues addressed include, but are not limited to, resource conservation, environmental protection, safety of workers and the public, integrity of the project, and the orderly, efficient and economic development of the resource.

The accord is designed to meet the following objectives:

- provide an appropriate "one window" application, approval and reporting procedure,
- optimize the efficient use of resources available to both organizations,
- ensure compliance with regulatory standards,
- assure communication and coordination between organizations.

3.0 DEFINITION OF ROLES

3.1 ERCB

All aspects of oil sands and coal operations are part of the ERCB approved project. This includes site preparation, overburden removal, mining, processing, discard disposal, and related impoundment facilities, related infrastructure along with reclamation and abandonment. The ERCB's prime role is to foster economic, orderly, and efficient development of coal and oil sands resources to ensure optimum resource conservation, environmental protection, and general safety in the public interest. The ERCB's functions can be grouped into three main categories:

- evaluating and approval of applications for new and expanding energy projects,
- regulating existing energy facilities to ensure they are operating safely, efficiently and in ways that avoid waste and control pollution,
- assessing energy resources and markets, and
- providing advice, information and statistics to the public, to government and to the energy industry, on Alberta's energy resources.

Due to the long term nature of coal and oil sands projects, the ERCB review of new projects deals mainly with conceptual planning and preliminary engineering design issues. The project implementation, detailed design, and operational issues are regulated by the ERCB in coordination with the appropriate government authorities.

The role of the ERCB is to assure that:

- structures are located such that resource sterilization is minimized,
- the facilities are needed and sized to adequately service the proposed project,
- the site is appropriate considering logistics, as well as environmental acceptability,
- The proposed design meets requirements for worker and public safety, and integrity of the project,

In the context of coal and oil sands projects, the ERCB will be responsible for:

- reviewing the need for and location of impoundment and diversion facilities at the

application stage for new or amended projects

- reviewing changes in impoundment and diversion facilities that significantly impact mine operations or lease development.

3.2 Dam Safety Branch

The Dam Safety Branch has primary responsibility for the approval of safe design and construction practices, and field monitoring and inspections of dams in the province of Alberta. The roles of the dam safety program are:

- to produce and maintain an inventory of impoundment and diversion structures,
- to determine the hazard potential of such structures,
- to review and approve plans for proposed dams, modifications to existing dams and abandonment of dams,
- to advise the Controller of Water Resources on appropriate terms and conditions for interim licences or amendments to interim licences,
- to inspect dams and diversion facilities and make recommendations for repairs,
- to ensure that Safety Reports are prepared for significant projects,
- to ensure that Emergency Preparedness Plans are written for high hazard dams and diversion structures.

In the context of impoundment and diversion facilities for coal and oil sands projects, the Dam Safety Branch will be responsible for:

- reviewing the geotechnical engineering design and construction methods of new and existing impoundment and diversion structures as applications are made under the Water Rights Act,
- inspecting these structures to ensure compliance with design recommendations,
- reviewing performance monitoring and dam safety reports,
- reviewing Emergency Preparedness Plans.

4.0 COORDINATION OF SERVICES

4.1 General provisions

- Any concerns of either or both agencies related to these structures will be jointly communicated to the operator.

- Dam Safety Branch and ERCB staff will discuss and resolve any concerns with the design, construction methods and monitoring programs of these structures, as required, before recommending any formal approvals under their respective Acts.

- If either Dam Safety Branch or ERCB staff believe that changes to the design, construction methods, or monitoring programs are necessary in order to improve the safety of these structures, then these items will be discussed prior to these concerns being resolved with the company.

- Each agency will provide a copy of any approval or order to its counterpart.

- The ERCB and the Dam Safety Branch will coordinate their abandonment approvals for an energy project. The standard of reclamation of impoundment and diversion facilities associated with energy projects will be included with the overall reclamation plan to the project and will continue to be regulated pursuant to the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act and administered by Alberta Environmental Protection.

4.2 Applications for ERCB project approvals

Industry will submit a project application (e.g. oil sands mine approval, coal mine site permit) to the ERCB that addresses the need for, and location of, all impoundment and diversion structures associated with the project.

The ERCB will forward the application to AEP as part of the normal referral process. The Environmental Impact Assessment Division or other responsible AEP Division will coordinate the review by involved AEP divisions and other government departments and transmit any concerns with the application to the respective ERCB Department. These and other concerns identified during the ERCB application review process will be referred to applicants for response.

Following a response from the applicant and a decision to approve, the ERCB will issue a project approval that includes approval of the proposed impoundment/diversion facility. The approval to construct is subject to industry satisfying the Dam Safety Branch's detailed design review.

4.3 Applications to construct impoundment or diversion structures

Applications and detailed geotechnical engineering design information for the construction of oil sands tailings ponds, sediment settling ponds, water storage reservoirs and stream diversion structures will be submitted to the Controller of Water Resources who will forward it to the Dam Safety Branch for review.

The Dam Safety Branch will coordinate the review and will refer the application to the respective ERCB department. The ERCB will review the application to confirm statements and commitments made in the project application or approval requirements regarding need, location, schedule, and mitigation of issues raised in the initial project application and forward concerns to the Dam Safety Branch for resolution. Following consultation with the respective ERCB Department and consensus on the suitability of the proposal, AEP will issue approval for the facility.

The two stage coal approval process under the Coal Conservation Act requires the proponent to submit a detailed design for any liquid discard site (i.e. tailings pond) for approval by the ERCB and AEP. This detailed design application should be prepared according to the joint guidelines developed by the ERCB and AEP. The applications are submitted to the Coal Department, ERCB who will refer copies to the Director, Land Reclamation Branch, AEP. Government review including Dam Safety Branch concerns will be coordinated by the Chairman, Conservation and Reclamation Review Committee. On agreement that the application is complete and satisfactory, AEP and ERCB will consult on approval conditions and issue their respective approvals.

4.4 Monitoring and performance reports

The ERCB and Dam Safety Branch will consult and coordinate monitoring and performance report requirements for each project.

Monitoring and performance reports will be submitted by the licensee to the Dam Safety Branch and referred to the respective ERCB Department for review.

In the event that a facility's performance is below acceptable standards and requires remedial measures that can impact mine operations, the ERCB will be involved in the review process, by an AEP referral.

4.5 Inspections

The ERCB and Dam Safety Branch will conduct inspections at appropriate intervals in respect to their regulatory responsibilities. When considered necessary or more efficient for regulatory control, joint inspections will be conducted. The inspecting agency shall forward any inspection report that notes unsafe conditions, non-compliance with

approvals, or the need for action to the other agency.

5.0 This agreement supersedes the agreement of April 1989.

6.0 REVIEW OF AGREEMENT

This agreement shall be reviewed by ERCB and AEP within five years from the effective date of the agreement.

for P.G. Melnychuk
Deputy Minister
Alberta Environmental Protection

Oct 31, 1994
Dated

F.J. Mink
Vice Chairman
Energy Resources Conservation Board

94-10-18
Dated

ERCB

Energy Resources Conservation Board

640 Fifth Avenue SW
Calgary, Alberta
Canada T2P 3G4

Informational Letter IL 94-20

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
NOV 15 1994
SCIENCE LIBRARY

TO: All Oil And Gas Operators
All Live Oil Meter Proving Companies

1 November 1994

METER PROVING MONITORING PROGRAM

In Interim Directive ID 88-3, the Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB) announced a program to monitor the performance of test oil meter proving companies. The program was active from 1989 to 1992 and showed a significant improvement in the quality of meter proving. The ERCB has not performed any calibration checks since the fall of 1992. Given the documented success of the program, the conscientious efforts of the test proving industry, and the current budgetary constraints, the ERCB has reviewed the need for the program and concluded it should be discontinued. ID 88-3 and IL 89-10 are therefore rescinded.

The ERCB believes that the maintenance of high quality provings of test oil meters is required to ensure accurate measurement and reporting of production. The ERCB has, however, concluded that the onus to ensure that this requirement is met lies with the licensees and operators of the oil and gas facilities and the Board expects industry to take an active role in meeting the obligation. The ERCB will continue to spot check meter proving reports and results as part of the Production Audit process and will re-evaluate the need for alternate measures to ensure the quality of meter proofs if problems are evident. To assist industry in meeting this objective, the ERCB plans to review, update, and clarify the minimum proving requirements as currently outlined in Part 14 of the Oil and Gas Conservation Regulations.

Questions or concerns regarding this matter should be directed to the ERCB's Drilling and Production Department at 297-5341.

N. G. Berndtsson, P.Eng.
Board Member

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
JAN 12 1995
LIBRARY

EUB Alberta Energy and Utilities Board

Calgary Office 640 - 5 Avenue SW Calgary, Alberta Canada T2P 3G4 Tel 403 297-8311 Fax 403 297-7336

INFORMATIONAL LETTER IL 94-21

07 November 1994

TO: All Oil and Gas Operators

PRIDE FORMS - CHANGE OF IMPLEMENTATION DATE

Further to Informational Letter 94-14 dated 20 June 1994, the ERCB has agreed to delay the date of implementation for the Well Activity Statement (WAS) and the Facility Activity Statement (FAS) until the July 1995 production reporting period. This decision has been made in conjunction with the PRIDE Steering Committee and is based on feedback from all parties regarding the effort required to meet the original implementation date of January 1995 production reporting. The implementation date for ERCB reporting non-compliance fees, as outlined in Informational Letter 94-16 dated 02 August 1994, will also be delayed until the July 1995 production period.

PRIDE has received several change request notices relating to the WAS and FAS. These requests are being reviewed and any necessary changeswill be incorporated into PRIDE's Release 6. A schedule for Release 6will be published as soon as possible and available for pickup at the PRIDE office. The ERCB will incorporate Release 6 into its systemdesign and amend the 'Filing Guide for WAS/FAS' accordingly. A newFiling Guide will be issued to Industry as soon as it can be made available.

Questions related to the relevant ERCB Informational Letters should be directed to Barb Ramsay at (403) 297-4613. Questions or moreinformation regarding the PRIDE documents should be directed to thePRIDE help desk at (403) 260-7124.

signed by

Steve Horner
Chairman
PRIDE Steering Committee

N.G. Berndtsson
Board Member
ERCB

Return to top of this Informational Letter

ERCB

Energy Resources Conservation Board

640 Fifth Avenue SW
Calgary, Alberta
Canada T2P 3G4

Informational Letter IL 94-22

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
DEC 13 1994
SCIENCE LIBRARY

TO: All Oil, Gas, Pipeline, and Oil Sands Operators

14 November 1994

OPERATING GUIDELINES FOR INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITY IN CARIBOU RANGE - NORTH-WEST ALBERTA

Woodland caribou are designated an "endangered species" in Alberta. In an attempt to coordinate industrial development on caribou range, operating guidelines have been prepared by representatives of the upstream petroleum industry, forest industry, and government for specific regions of caribou range. General guidelines currently exist for North-east Alberta, as well as range-specific guidelines for the Slave Lake, Red Earth, and Pedigree areas of North-west Alberta. General guidelines for North-west Alberta have recently been developed in recognition of significant caribou range not previously covered by guidelines. A copy of the operating guidelines for North-west Alberta is attached to this Informational Letter.

These guidelines introduce the requirements for development of caribou protection plans when operating in caribou range within North-west Alberta. These operating guidelines are superseded by the Red Earth and Slave Lake range-specific protection plans, but take precedent over the outdated Pedigree protection plan. They also apply to other areas in North-west Alberta not previously covered by operating guidelines. The guidelines for North-east Alberta remain in effect.

Caribou protection plans are to be submitted to Alberta Environmental Protection (AEP) for approval prior to granting of surface dispositions. It is anticipated that significant flexibility on the part of both the operator and AEP will be required to ensure that the plans are able to effectively meet the two goals of allowing energy development while adequately protecting woodland caribou.

Administration and approval of the protection plans are the responsibility of AEP and questions should be addressed to the appropriate ranger district office in the Peace River Region, Land Forest Services, Alberta Environmental Protection. For wildlife information during the pre-planning phase, please contact:

Alberta Environmental Protection
Fish and Wildlife Services
P.O. Bag 900-26
Peace River, AB T0H 2X0
Telephone: 624-6405

The ERCB will serve as a referral agency for AEP on technical matters related to drilling, production, transportation, and processing operations on an as-needed basis.

B. F. Bietz, Ph.D., P.Biol.
Board Member

Enclosure

Operating Guidelines **94/09/14**
For Industrial Activity in
Caribou Ranges In Northwest Alberta

Introduction:

Woodland caribou are classified as an endangered species pursuant to the Alberta Wildlife Act. As part of the caribou protection and maintenance effort, management plans are being prepared to facilitate industrial development on caribou range and provide that the integrity and supply of habitat is maintained to permit its use by caribou. This report is the industrial management plan for the caribou ranges shown in Figure 1. It provides a long term management philosophy which may be applied in range specific plans. This philosophy mitigates long term production impacts as opposed to the short term impact of exploration and development. Some of these ranges currently have range-specific management plans which address individual industry sectors (Red Earth and Slave Lake). These plans will supersede the more general Northwest Plan. The Pedigree Plan is outdated. The Northwest Guidelines will apply to the Pedigree area. Each management plan will be implemented with flexibility and common sense.

Principles

The following principles apply to the Northwest caribou ranges:

1. Industrial activity can occur on caribou range provided that the integrity and supply of habitat is maintained to permit its use by caribou.

2. A Caribou Protection Plan will be prepared by each company operating in a caribou range. These plans will be incorporated into Annual Operating Plans produced by timber companies and as independent plans developed by oil and gas companies. Items listed in the Caribou Protection Plan Section of this document should be addressed in these plans. Innovative techniques or procedures will be shared amongst the operators at the end of each season.

3. Government and industry will take a flexible but conservative approach to project planning and caribou protection.

4. The effectiveness of this plan and the range specific plans will be assessed and the plans modified as required.

5. This plan and the range specific plans will be modified as required to incorporate new information derived from the ongoing research work.

6. Industry will begin work in caribou range as early as possible in the winter and take necessary steps to complete their winter's work as early as possible.

Management Strategy

Industrial activity could affect caribou in four ways:

- increased public access to the range
- increased predation pressure
- additional sensory disturbance
- habitat alteration

It is assumed that public access, predation and habitat alteration are primary concerns and sensory disturbance is a secondary concern. Habitat supply will be dealt with in separate planning exercises.

The northwestern caribou ranges include a major muskeg component, and are therefore primarily a frozen ground development situation. As such, many of the impacts of the exploration/development phase are difficult to mitigate. There is a greater opportunity to mitigate the longer term impacts associated with the production phase. To achieve caribou management objectives the combined impacts of oil and gas operating and development activities must be at a level which do not significantly affect caribou. A strategy proposed to achieve this is:

1. Public access management is required for operational and exploration/development phases within the caribou range. Public support is necessary for access management when traditional access routes are involved.

2. The caribou ranges are divided into two areas, those with existing activity and those without. Each area will be managed differently.

    a) **Existing Activity Area**
    All areas within 1 mile of an existing all weather road and all operations that are currently producing oil and gas using frozen access on a seasonal basis are included. Operations may continue to operate as they have in the past. The Existing Activity Area is shown in Figure 1.

    b) **New Activity Area**
    All areas within caribou ranges which are not Existing Activity Areas. Exploration and development activity will occur on frozen ground. Production facilities will be operated remotely. Remote operations in this context means operations which occur primarily without surface access. Aerial support and telemetry are currently being used to achieve this objective. Other innovative methods may be developed which also meet this objective. It is recognized that some facilities will require annual, frozen-ground surface access in early winter for servicing and transport of supplies and materials.

Remote operations will not always be technically feasible. In this circumstance, the Caribou Protection Plan will explain why remote operations are not feasible, provide a description of proposed operations including access and indicate how the impacts on caribou will be mitigated. Mitigation strategies may include, but not be limited to, roll back, access management, timing restrictions, allowing snow build up on roads and innovation. The technical expertise of the ERCB will be used to assess the infeasibility of remote operation of the proposed facility.

Measures can be taken to facilitate emergency access as long as they are consistant with the intent of this plan.

The Existing Area/New Area designation will be considered along with habitat quality by the timber industry in sequencing their work. Generally harvesting in the New Activity Areas will be scheduled first. Timber haul in New Activity Areas will be on frozen ground access.

3. Caribou Protection Plan

A Caribou Protection Plan will be prepared by each company for its work program in caribou ranges. A copy of the approved plan will be submitted with each oil and gas disposition in caribou range. This plan will be incorporated into the disposition approval and serve as the wildlife mitigation for the disposition. Each of the points in the Template (Section 3b) must be addressed in the Protection Plan.

3a Process

- a range specific Caribou Protection Plan will be developed by each company for each year's operation.

- for the 1994/95 winter Caribou Protection Plans should be submitted as soon as possible. In future years, these plans should be submitted by the early fall. Late submissions will be considered in exceptional circumstances.

- companies unfamiliar with operating in caribou ranges are encouraged to seek preliminary information from Environmental Protection and Northwest Standing Committee members before developing the Protection Plan.

- the Caribou Protection Plans will be submitted to the applicable Ranger District Office. It is recommended that plans for major developments be presented at a meeting with Lands and Forest Service and Fish and Wildlife staff as has occurred in the past.

- these plans will be reviewed and a decision conveyed to the Company within 5 working days unless ERCB review is required.

- disputes and disagreements will normally be addressed through discussion and consultation as in the past. In situations where resolution of differences is not achieved, the Company may use the appeal process.

- each company will advise the Northwest Standing Committee of innovative technologies and strategies at the end of each operating season. The Northwest Standing Committee will disseminate this information to all members.

3b **Template**

Timing/Sequencing
The objective of the timing/sequencing section is to achieve the early in/early out philosophy.

- sequence operations to complete work in more critical caribou habitats first ie. scarce habitat types

- use additional equipment and crews to compress the work time to get out early.

- commence operations as soon as frost conditions exist

- plan the winter's work early

- an activity schedule should be provided

Access Development
The objective of this section is to minimize the quantity and quality of access

- use Low Impact Seismic

- use existing access

- use shared/common access

- all access for the exploration/development phase will be temporary winter access

- production operations will be primarily conducted without surface access.

- during the production phase necessary servicing and transport of materials and equipment will be done in early winter using temporary winter access

Public Access Management

- An effective form of public access control must be maintained on all new developments within the caribou range at all times that access routes are open. Current access controls will also be maintained. Gates, manned access control, temporary rollback or blockage during non-active periods, etc. may be considered.

4. Emergency Situations

This plan has been prepared to address normal industrial activities. If major problems develop, such as a well blow out or pipeline break or serious human injury, necessary steps will be taken to address the problem. If an extremely severe winter occurs, government and industry will consult to determine what, if any, modifications will be necessary to address the situation.

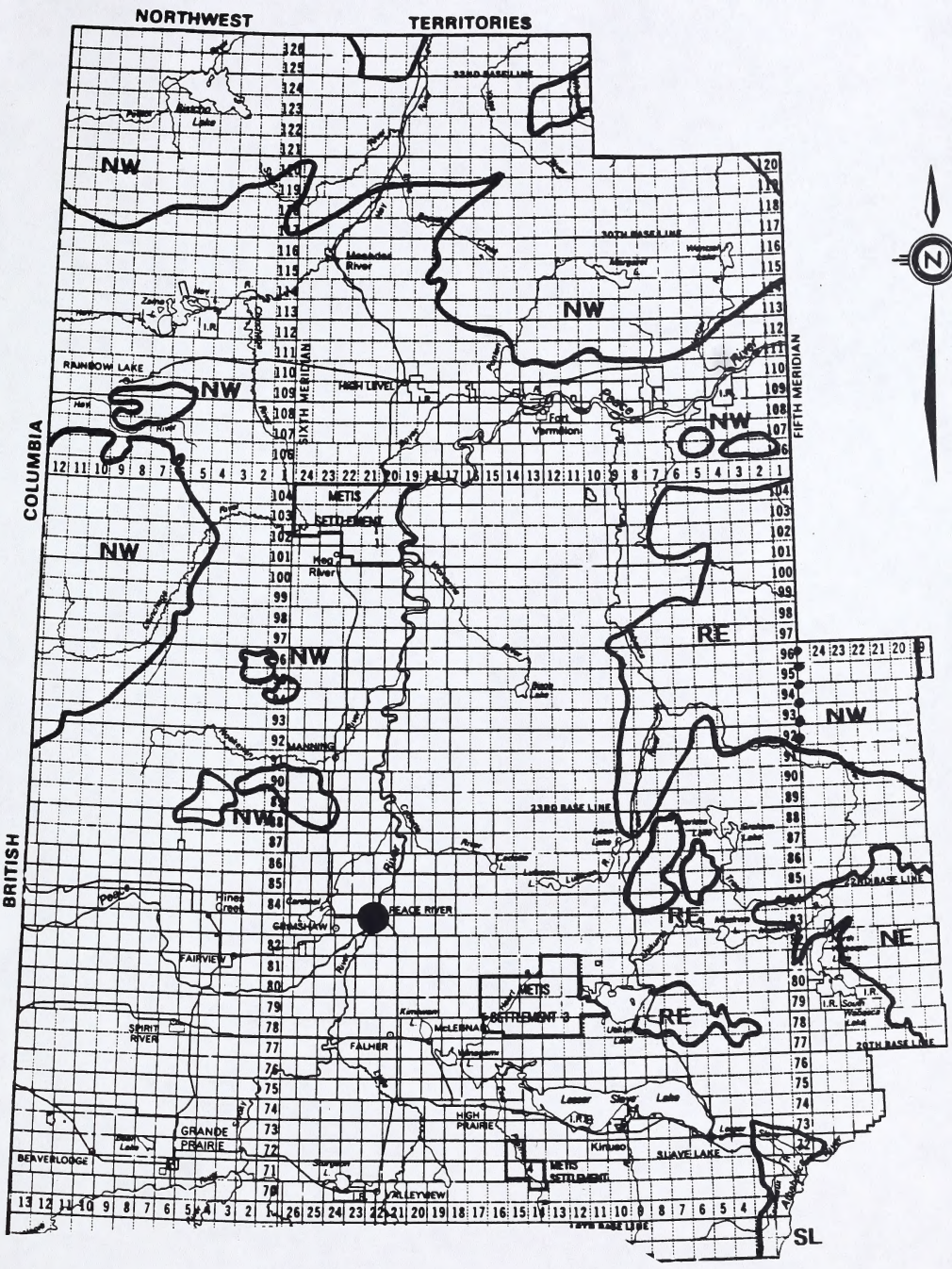

Figure 1: Caribou Ranges in NW Alberta

NW Caribou Range - NW Plan Guidelines
RE Caribou Range - Red Earth Plan Guidelines
SL Caribou Range - Slave Lake Plan Guidelines
NE Caribou Range - NE Guidelines

For more detailed maps (1:500,000), contact Land and Forest Services Offices in Slave Lake, Peace River or High Level. 1:50,000 scale maps are available in District Ranger Offices.